

Community Group Discussion Questions

“The Alienness of the Church”

1 Peter 2:11-12

Sermon Series Title: “The Church of God”

Sermon Series Summary: The Church of God is the people of God throughout the ages, redeemed by Jesus Christ. We’re going to take a look at who we are and who we are called to be as the church of God. More specifically, we see that who we are is directly connected to whose we are in Christ.

Passage Setting: 1 Peter is written by the apostle Peter. He is the one who struggled with his impulsive behavior in the Gospels and denied Jesus 3 times. But after the resurrection, he became the spokesperson for the church in the beginning of Acts. This letter is written to persecuted Christians with a Jewish background. But the lessons from this book are not to be applied ethnically but spiritually for all Christians.

Summary: Peter calls the church to live as strangers and aliens in this world. This does not mean we are to be separate from the world. Instead, we are to be in the world but not of the world. We are able to do this because of Christ who was the ultimate alien for us.

Central Truth: “In Christ as the ultimate stranger, let us live in the world but not of the world.”

Sermon Points:

1. Where are we?
2. What are we called to do?
3. How do we do it?

Opening Question

1. Have you ever felt out of place? Why? What did you do about it?

(Answers may vary.)

In our passage, Peter says that we should feel out of place in this world. We are sojourners and exiles. This world is not our home. We belong elsewhere to our Father in Heaven.

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Read 1 Peter 2:11-12

2. What are the different ways we can approach this world?

(There are four main ways Christians can live in this world. First, it's through Assimilation. We adopt the world's values, ethics, and practices. We don't look any different from the world. Second, it's through Separation. We try to live our own lives, separated from the world. We don't interact with non-Christians at all. Third, it's through Domination. Christians try to use power and politics to enforce Christian law, ethics, and faith on others. Lastly, it's through Attraction through Alienness. We are to be in the world but not of the world. We are to be set apart from the world, but we still interact with non-Christians.

That is how Peter is calling us to live. We are sojourners and exiles. But at the same time, we are living among non-Christians and interacting with them so much that they see our good deeds and are impacted by them. Our good deeds are not just morally good acts, but it's a beautiful life that we live. This life is found upon the law, wisdom, and fruit of Christ.)

3. What are some of the challenges for us to be "aliens and strangers?"

(Answers will vary.

It's hard for us to be discerning. If God created the world, then His creation is good. Which parts of our culture and this world are good and which are passions of the flesh? Which parts of our culture/world/lifestyle does the gospel criticize/affirm? Which parts of our faith are just mindless practices of religion and which parts are faithful to Scripture? Over what issues are we called to make a stand and over what issues are we called to give grace and compassion toward/submit? When is my heart courageous for Christ or stubbornly proud before others? How much are we friends with the world? Are we loving others or are we compromising our faith?

For me: it's most difficult for me to just live with the law, heart, wisdom, and fruit of Christ.)

Final Thoughts: *Christ is the ultimate Sojourner and Exile. He lived life beautifully and was rejected constantly. He was the perfect example of being in the world but not*

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of the world. He was opposed and crucified by the Jewish leaders. He was exiled by God on the cross. He became the ultimate Exile/Alien on the cross, so that we may be brought into His kingdom and His household. That is how we can be exiles/aliens in this world for His glory.